ABSTRACT

A system is provided in which a sale price is determined based on a product description, and the sale price is transmitted to a customer. The customer is not guaranteed what specific product will be sold to the customer before an agreement to purchase a product for the sale price is received from the customer. After receiving the agreement, a retailer selects a product conforming to the product description, and identifies the product to the customer.

By virtue of the above system, the retailer is able to evaluate a customer's individual demand based on the received description and to determine a sale price accordingly, thereby reducing losses associated with conventional single-price systems. Although this may result in different sale prices for an identical product, the system is perceived as fair because a higher-paying customer likely agreed to a different product description than a lower-paying customer, and neither would have agreed to the other's product description and sale price.

The system also allows a retailer to mask product discounts by selecting undesirable redemption conditions under which to sell the product, such as pickup at a faraway location, even if the product is available at a closer location. As a result, the customer believes that the discount is attributable to the undesirable redemption conditions, rather than to the product quality or to decreased demand. Accordingly, price and brand dilution are minimized.